

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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This is UNEVALUATED Information

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. Dr. K. Sorgenfrei, head of the East German Central Serum-Testing Institute in Berlin-Pankow, went to Prague on 20 January 1954 to visit the Czechoslovak bodies concerned with the prevention and combating of epidemics. 25X1
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2. Dr. Sorgenfrei's visit was very strictly controlled. He was required to stay at the Esplanade Hotel and was told by an official of the East German Embassy that he was to take his meals only in that hotel and was not to visit other hotels or restaurants. He was under surveillance for the whole of his visit. On the one free afternoon, he took coffee in a café; next morning he was summoned to the Embassy, reprimanded and told not to repeat the offense. He was not allowed any postal communication with Germany. As he was not told this before he went, his wife became anxious and was eventually informed by the Foreign Ministry of the ban on writing.
3. He was allowed 135 Czech crowns per day, of which his accommodation and food cost about 100. The balance, he found, would purchase very little at the high prices prevailing in Prague.

Medical Institutes in Prague

4. The institutes dealing with preventive medicine are all on the grounds of the former State Health Establishment, founded in 1925, and are situated on a slope facing south in the Vinohrady district of Prague. They comprise:
 - a. The Institute for the Control of Medicaments, Sera, and Vaccines.
 - b. Biogena, a nationalized organization for the production of sera and vaccines.
 - c. The Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology.

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(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X"; Field Distribution By "#")

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- d. The Institute of Hygiene.
- e. The Dean's Office of the Faculty of Hygiene and Medicine.¹
- f. Establishments for the production of rabies and smallpox vaccines.
- g. The Research Institute of Tuberculosis

The physical proximity of these institutes is intended to facilitate quick and informal cooperation in all matters relating to epidemics.. Furthermore, immediately adjoining the group of institutes is a large hospital with which they are continually in touch.

- 5. The Institute for Epidemiology and Microbiology is the most important of the group and its chief, Prof. Racka, is in charge of the entire group. A department of this Institute receives notifications of infectious diseases throughout Czechoslovakia for collation and recording. The same department prepares the material for explanatory notices for general circulation and for questionnaires related to its work. The Institute guides the work of various local hygienic and epidemiological stations throughout the country. The staff of these stations receives specialized instruction in the departments of the Institute, and can call for assistance, in the form of an aircraft or a van equipped as a laboratory, to deal with an outbreak. When the laboratory of a local station isolates a new strain of a disease agent, this is sent to the relevant section of the Institute and is card-indexed and put into the strain collection in the microbiological section of the Institute.
- 6. The biggest department of this Institute is the salmonella department, which, apart from its tasks of investigation, teaching, and research, produces sera and carries out diagnoses. In view of the increase in demand for such sera, a new establishment of the nationalized production organization² is shortly to be set up to take over this work. Other departments of this Institute are the whooping-cough department, the streptococcus department, the phages department, the virus department, and the parasitology department.
- 7. The Institute for the Control of Medicaments, Sera, and Vaccines tests all medical drugs, for example:
 - a. In the bacteriology department: the sterility and harmlessness of products and the biochemical characteristics of culture strains.
 - b. In the serology department: the efficacy of vaccines, the serological characteristics of culture strains, the harmlessness and efficacy of anti-toxic vaccines.
 - c. In the chemical department: the albumen content, antisepsis, ammonium sulphate, pH value, etc.
 - d. In the pharmacology department: all other medicines.
 Specimens for testing are taken from medical stores.
- 8. Bacterial vaccines, antitoxic sera and similar products are usually tested at the Institute itself. In the case of those produced far from Prague, the testing is carried out by the chief or deputy chief of the appropriate local station as designated by the Ministry of Health. Preparations with a short storage life, like Ambozeptor, are tested in special establishments. The M-, N-, and Rh- blood-group factor sera of this type are tested in the Institute of Haematology and Blood Transfusion, and the second test by the State Testing Institute is omitted. When discrepancies occur, further tests are carried out in the presence of the producer.
- 9. The State Testing Institute in Prague receives twice a year from the State Serum Institute in Copenhagen standard antitoxins against diphtheria, tetanus, gas gangrene (*clostridium perfringens*, *septicum*, *histolyticum* (sic), *oedematicum*), and *staphylococcus*.

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10. Biogena is an important manufacturer of preparations compulsorily subject to testing. Production is controlled by a Main Administration which receives its orders and general directions from the Ministry of Health. It produces sera and vaccines of the most varied kinds, bacteriophages, allergens, tuberculin, and therapeutic preparations based on snake poisons. Control of the quality of production is carried out by three separate departments:

- The biological department tests the quality of the sera, their sterility and microscopy.
- The chemical department carries out physical and chemical tests such as colorimetry, spectrography, polarography, pH-measurement, analytical examination, weighing, titration, the production of buffer solutions and formalin dilutions. Also, all reagents received are tested, in particular for purity, before being passed to the production departments.
- The cultures department receives the bacterial strains from the Institute for Epidemiology and Microbiology, tests them for biological action (Verhalten), agglutinating properties, and virulence by experiments on animals, and keeps them in a strain collection. Samples (Abimpfungen) are passed to the production departments. The strain collections held in each part of the works are checked each quarter by the cultures department, and any found to be below standard are replaced with new strains.

11. An Immunology Research Institute has developed out of a small research department of Biogena. It is under the control of the Main Administration of Biogena and receives enquiries and problems from the production departments and instructions from the Ministry of Health.

12. The Institute of Hygiene is housed in the same block of buildings as the State Testing Institute. The public health department contains sub-departments for dealing with the applications of hygiene to air, water, sewage, soil, land-settlement, the person, clothing, and schools. The department of physiology and food hygiene contains sections dealing with hygiene as applied to food, articles in everyday use, packing materials, synthetic materials, and cosmetic preparations. Questions relating to communal feeding arrangements are also dealt with and the guiding principles for canteens worked out. A special department scientifically evaluates all opinions and enquiries on hygiene, assembles them in archives and, in consultation with the local stations, establishes a standard procedure for the analytical test methods. The department of labor hygiene is in a separate establishment.

13. [redacted]

14. Attached to the group of institutes is a large and well equipped snake farm, containing many rare specimens. To all appearances, intensive research is being carried out in the spheres of snake toxin and preventives.

15. [redacted] these institutes were staffed by large numbers of doctors, all highly specialized in narrow fields, and with a low standard of general professional training.

16. [redacted]

17. [redacted] the technical equipment of the institutes. Practically all the apparatus is made of copper, whereas in East Germany one has to make do with glass, which easily breaks and makes some testing arrangements quite impossible.

18. After Dr. Sorgenfrei's visit, an agreement was signed between Czechoslovakia and East Germany on cooperation in the field of hygiene and bacteriology. The signatories of the agreement were:

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- a. for Czechoslovakia: for the Ministry of Health, V. Sonrek and Z. Kasik; for the Chief Administration of Medicament Production, Dr. R. Roubicek; for the Technoexport corporation of Prague, Kemrova (fmu); and for the Bohumil Serum Station and Farm, an unidentified representative.
- b. for East Germany: for the Central Serum Testing Institute, Dr. Sorgenfrei; for the Ministry of Health (after checking by Dr. Saatz³), the Minister or his Deputy; for the Office of Scientific and Technical Cooperation of the State Planning Commission, Gabriel⁴; and for the East German Government, its Ambassador in Prague.
- 19. The agreement provides that Czechoslovakia will make the following available to East Germany:
 - a. Standards for nutrients, produced by Dr. Jegorows (fmu) (German spelling) of the Institute for the Control of Medicaments, which are used for sterility testing of biological preparations.
 - b. Prescriptions for nutrients for the production of tetanus and diphtheria toxins.
 - c. Prescriptions for nutrients for the cultivation of gonococcus.
 - d. Standards for antidiphtheria and antitetanus sera.
 - e. Standards for the control testing of antitoxin vaccines for diphtheria and tetanus, of gamma globulin, of typhoid bacteria, of placental extract of mixed vaccines, including the mixed vaccine against tetanus and salmonella.
 - f. All the newest standards (Normen).
 - g. Standard strains of the following:
 - (1) Ty Vi (sic)
 - (2) H - parapertussis (sic)
 - (3) H - whooping-cough (sic)
 - (4) gonococcus
 - (5) dysentery - Flexner
 - (6) diphtheria
 - (7) tetanus.
 - h. A strain of toxoplasma (sic).
 - i. Diagnostic whooping-cough serum and a standard whooping-cough strain for the evaluation of whooping-cough vaccines.
 - j. A parapertussis strain and serum.
 - k. A catalogue of the cultures collection.
 - l. A monograph on lyophil-drying of sera and bacterial cultures. East Germany will be allowed to retain the documents for two months, after which they must be returned to Czechoslovakia.

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Comments: 1. Presumably of Charles University of Prague.
 2. [] presumably refers to Biogena, National Enterprise;
 see above, paragraph 4b.

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